

Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Social Services
Office of the Commissioner
7 N. 8th St.
Richmond, VA 23219

Commissioner's Memo No. 009

DATE: April 2, 2008

TO: Directors of Local Departments of Social Services

FROM: Anthony Conyers Jr.

Directors,

Following are the topics contained in this Memorandum:

- [No Wrong Door](#)
- [Conference Budget Update](#)
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No Wrong Door

Local departments of social services are among the Commonwealth's most critical access points for Virginians in need. The No Wrong Door (NWD) Initiative is designed to improve coordination among state and local providers of long-term care services on behalf of seniors, their caregivers and persons with disabilities. This initiative will assist localities in preparing for unprecedented growth in the older population and serving people with special needs more effectively.

Currently, 59 jurisdictions are actively participating in NWD. I join Secretary Marilyn Tavenner in the hope that these services will expand to other parts of the state. Lead by the local Area Agencies on Aging, some communities have already established Local Advisory Councils that include participants from local Departments of Health and Social Services; Community Services Boards; Centers for Independent Living; where feasible, representatives from Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Blind and Visually Impaired, and Rehabilitative Services; hospitals, customers and families; and other local private organizations.

Web-based NWD intake and referral tools are being developed to coordinate accessible information for all persons seeking long-term support. As the name implies, the goal is to minimize confusion, enhance individual choice and support informed decision making.

The Virginia Department for the Aging (VDA) has created a NWD Security Policy that outlines technical safeguards and action related to maintaining the security of client data. Multiple agencies have the capacity to exchange information on a

shared client when the client has given written permission for the agencies to do so – all in accordance with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and related state and federal regulations.

These efforts to improve long-term care services for seniors and adults with disabilities should prove enormously beneficial to our clients. Additional information regarding this initiative may be found on the [VDA Web site](#). In addition, we will keep you updated as the initiative progresses.

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Conference Budget Update

During the recent local director's video conference, interest was expressed in having the biennium budget conference update provided by J.R. Simpson made available in writing. The information requested is summarized below. It should be noted that changes could be made by the Administration that would have an impact on this update.

- Funding was provided to offset the loss in federal funds experienced as a result of the rewrite of the Department's Public Assistance Cost Allocation Plan (PACAP). General funds of \$11.9M annually were required and made available to ensure there was not a severe adverse impact on current operations. As you may recall, the PACAP rewrite was a required element of the Settlement Agreement reached with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, related to past revenue maximization strategies employed to enhance Title IV-E recoveries.
- An additional \$6M annually was provided in support of Fee Child Care.
- Our facility study efforts paid off with approximately \$200K in general funds provided annually to address our most critical local department facility needs. We anticipate funds will be available to address the top fifteen facilities identified in the 2007 Local Space Study Report.
- A number of needs were addressed related to the First Lady's For Keeps Initiative. These include a foster care rate increase of 15% on July 1, 2008 and an additional 8% on July 1, 2009. Funds were also provided to enhance the recruitment and retention of foster parents. General funds in the amount of \$835K the first year and \$875K the second year were provided to meet this need. A total of \$395K was provided each year to enhance child welfare training.
- Funds were provided to support annual staff salary increases of 2% each year of the biennium.
- There were a number of other adjustments made that do not have a direct impact on local operations. This includes a small number of TANF "swaps"

where appropriate activities will be covered with TANF funds instead of general funds, funding for the Division of Child Support Enforcement required as a result of the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005, as well as some adjustments made in areas of under spending in our base budget.

We remain optimistic about progress to date in working together on these issues of significant importance to Virginia's most vulnerable residents. However, current economic conditions could result in further reductions to the Department's budget that could impact local operations. As we have done in the recent past, we will work to mitigate the impact to Local Departments of Social Services. We recognize needs exist that are not being addressed.

Please contact [J.R. Simpson](#) or [Mike Gump](#) if additional information is required or desired.

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Regional Preschool Discussion Sessions

As we know, the learning that takes place prior to a child's first day of kindergarten is critical for future academic success. Governor Kaine is sponsoring a series of regional discussion groups for preschool program leaders and community partners. Let's be involved in this dialogue.

During these discussion sessions, you and your staff members will have the opportunity to discuss recent legislation regarding preschool, and share information about successful strategies being utilized in communities across the state. There will be plenty of time for your questions and valued feedback.

An RSVP is requested – please see the attached “[Solving the Preschool Puzzle](#)” [flyer](#) for dates and locations.

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Thank you for your continued interest and support of these important issues.

AC/VDSS

